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THE IMPLICATIONS OF CHANGE FOR SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION.

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A MAJOR TASK OF THE COUNTY SUPERINTENDENT AND HIS STAFF IS THAT OF PLANNING NECESSARY FACILITIES AND PROVIDING SPECIALIZED PERSONNEL. HIS MAJOR RESPONSIBILITY IS THAT OF MAINTAINING UNIFORMITY IN COURSE CONTENT AND LEVEL OF ACHIEVEMENT IN SCHOOLS IN VARIOUS COUNTIES AND ACROSS STATE LINES. USE OF TELEVISED EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS HAS BECOME ALL BUT IMPOSSIBLE DUE TO SCHEDULING DIFFICULTIES AMONG SCHOOLS. AN IMMEDIATE NEED EXISTS FOR COORDINATED SCHEDULING AT THE DISTRICT LEVEL TO ALLOW CAPABLE STUDENTS AN OPPORTUNITY TO VIEW EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS, AND ATTEND COLLEGES OR VOCATIONAL SCHOOLS PART TIME. IF THIS OBJECTIVE IS TO BE REALIZED, THE COUNTY SUPERINTENDENT MUST ASSURE THAT ALL HIGH SCHOOLS CONCERNED HAVE THE SAME NUMBER OF PERIODS IN MORNING AND AFTERNOON, AND SCHOOL DAYS OF REASONABLY EQUAL LENGTH. OTHER SERVICES THE OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT IS UNIQUELY QUALIFIED TO ADMINISTER INCLUDE THE FILM LIBRARY (AS ENABLED BY THE NATIONAL DEFENSE EDUCATION ACT OF 1958), SPECIAL EDUCATION, AND TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOLS. THIS SPEECH WAS PRESENTED TO THE ANNUAL NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF COUNTY AND RURAL AREA SUPERINTENDENTS (15TH, LOUISVILLE, OCTOBER 9-12,1960). (DA)

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Howard A. Dawson

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COUNTY AND RURAL AREA SUPERINTENDENTS
Division of the Department of Rural Education
Louisville, Kentucky
Oct. 9-12, 1960

SPEAKER: Alfred W. Beattie, Superintendent of Schools, Allegheny County, Pittsburgh, Pa.

TOPIC: "The Implications of Change for School Administration"

PLACE: Grand Ballroom, Sheraton Hotel

Change has been an outstanding characteristic of the Twentieth Century. The patient plodding yokes of oxen of the early years of the nineteen hundreds gave way to horses, and horses to the internal combustion engine. Narrow, mud roads became black tops, concrete highways, and four-lane turnpikes. During these years our major corporations--in fact, major industries--came into being. Our giant corporations, U. S. Steel, Bethlehem, General Motors, Ford, General Electric, Columbia Gas, to mention a few, were born in this century. The electrical, automotive, airplane, chemical and drug, non-ferrous metals, radio and television industries are creations of this century. This century has been one of tremendous social changes. In 1900, we were an agricultural nation. Today we are urban. In 1900, we needed unlimited numbers of unskilled, untrained workers. Today, we have no place for the unskilled. Education in 1960 is almost unrecognizable in contrast with education in 1900. The average daily attendance in the schools in 1900 was 10,632,772. In 1958, average daily attendance was 29,813,000. High school enrollment in 1900 was 700,000. In 1958, high school enrollment was 9,482,000. Of course, the increased enrollment required new buildings and more teachers. But these are not the only significant changes. We have been closing one-room schools and housing children in consolidated schools. This change brought transportation of school children. Mounting concern about health brought medical and dental services into the school. Then, symptoms of mental, emotional, and social maladjustments brought psychiatric and psychological services. The necessity to know parents and to enlist constructive aid from parents caused the employment of home and school visitors and social workers. Public criticism of reading capabilities of children prompted employment of reading specialists and supervisors. Public desire that children match their aptitudes, interests, and capabilities with the

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requirements of a vocation, and the even greater desire that pupils recognize thier aptitudes, interests, and capabilities, compel the employment of guidance personnel. Changing occupational requirements and the national need to train youth to fit into skilled occupations quickly and successfully, during World War I, brought the trade and industrial school into being. Today, national need, armed forces and civilian, for technicians and curricular limitations of our high schools are forcing the establishment of technical schools at the secondary school level. Current uses of electronic devices make physics a requirement for non-college bound pupils. Computers are outmoding high school bookkeeping. To make everyone productive and to reduce the burden of supporting non-productive persons, special instruction for the blind, the deaf, the speech defects, the mentally retarded, the physically handicapped is being made available. Continuous demand for greater achievement by students requires renewed attention to the productivity of teaching. Supervision of teachers is an old topic. Now we must concern ourselves with the tools of instruction such as the library, maps, charts, apparatus, audio-visual aids, teaching machines. Changes in our American society are affecting the schools and they are adding to the duties, responsibilities, and complexities of administration of schools.

Although changes in the duties and responsibilies affect everyone employed in an administrative capacity, principals, administrators of school districts, county superintendents, State Department of Education personnel, I will address myself to the county superintendency. I recognize that we have two types of county superintendents in the United States. In twelve states the county superintendent is an operating superintendent. County superintendents in Florida and West Virginia are the chief administrative officers for all municipalities within the respective counties. County superintendents in ten additional states are the chief administrative officers for most of the municipalities within the respective counties. County superintendents in twenty-seven states have an intermediate status. They serve as an arm of the State Department of Education, as advisory and consulting employes of the school districts, and as agents of the General Assembly. Seven states have combinations of municipalities, each of which has a superintendent who is an intermediate officer between the state and the municipalities comprising a supervisory union or district. Regardless of its status as chief administrator of county schools or as an intermediate administrator, the county superintendency is a complex, complicated office.

As an arm of the state, the county superintendency is a planning agency. In county unit states, planning may apply to location and relocation of attendance areas, use of existing buildings, and construction of new buildings. In intermediate unit states, the planning will involve proposals for combinations of municipalities into larger administrative units; then for elementary and secondary attendance areas, proposed use of existing buildings, and construction of new buildings to house children residing within the proposed administrative unit. Planning begins with state standards. However,

state standards ordinarily are minimal. Consequently, the county planner finds himself setting up standards which are more realistic for wealthier districts, more densely populated areas, urban communities, or other types of communities. I am in a metropolitan county. We are proposing combinations of communities which have or will have five or six thousand pupils, and forty or more millions of dollars of assessed valuation of real estate. Five to six thousand children permits effective use of the 6-3-3 plan as follows: one senior high school 1000-1200 pupils, two junior high schools 600-750 pupils each, and seven or eight elementary schools having 400 pupils each. Areas combined to assemble five to six thousand children under unified management may vary from four or five square miles to forty or more square miles. As areas increase in size, transportation costs increase. Therefore, as a county planner, I find educational standards are in constant jeopardy of compromises reflecting the influences of non-educational factors.

Following approval by the state of county plans for combining communities into larger administrative units for establishing necessary attendance areas, county superintendents have the responsibility of selling the idea to the communities concerned. Ordinarily, reorganization legislation is permissory and vague, but members of the Legislatures are sharply critical of county superintendents whose powers of persuasion or salesmanship are not equal to the task. Hundreds of county superintendents find themselves in an embarrassing position. If they press for reorganization, they incur the ill will and condemnation of school directors from the various municipalities because legislation is not clear and succinct. If they fail to promote reorganization, because of the obscurity of the law or because of the difficulty of administering existing law, they are subject to legislative criticism. However, reorganization is being accomplished. The county superintendents of the United States are performing miracles in school district planning and reorganization.

The county superintendency is a coordinating agency. The county superintendent and staff keep district administrative personnel acquainted with state rules, regulations, and policies. He transmits district reports to the state and interprets district activities to the state. The coordinating activities of the county superintendent and staff became more important since World War II. Our people became mobile. They move from not only state to state but also from county to county. Thousands move annually from municipality to municipality. Schools must be organized so that pupils may be admitted to every new school with the minimum of adjustment. Above all, the new school must be able to match the old schedule. Subjects must be reasonably similar grade by grade. Recently a new type of coordination became necessary. Educational television which knows no boundaries revealed a disparity of practices from school to school and municipality to municipality. A simple question such as, "What is the best time to telecast a second grade reading lesson or physics lesson?" revealed serious lack of coordination. Apparently, there isn't a best time. We don't have statewide or countywide hours for opening and closing school, uniform recess times, or lunch periods. Length of school day varies. The length of the school year and the days when

school is in session varies. So television cannot be used effectively until school calendars, school schedules, and school programs have greater similarity. County superintendents in states served by the Flying Classroom have a major problem of coordination, if pupils in all school are to receive maximum benefits from the televised lessons.

There is the matter of coordinating high school schedules to permit capable students to attend universities or area technical and vocational schools part time. Obviously, all students registered in high schools who take some courses at a nearby university or who attend a technical or vocational school part time cannot be accommodated in the morning or afternoon. Some must attend high school in the morning and university, technical or vocational school in the afternoon. Some must attend university, thchnical or vocational school in the morning and high school in the afternoon. To meet the needs of these students, high schools must have the same number of periods in the morning and afternoon sessions. In addition, the high school must provide classes in every subject these pupils require during the morning and afternoon sessions.

In these days of acceleration, the county superintendent has another problem of coordination. How do we protect the child who gets three years of French in the lementary school who moves to a community which does not offer foreign languages at any grade?

Coordination of programs, policies, procedures across municipal and county boundaries is becoming an increasingly important responsibility of the county superintendency.

The county superintendent and staff are providing a growing list of advisory and consultant services. They assist district personnel in selecting school sites, advise on size of the attendance area, assist in determining the number of rooms, shops, laboratories and other facilities needed. Then, they study the arrangements proposed in the architect's floor plan.

County personnel assist in determining transportation requirements, setting up bus routes, and interpreting state regulations. County personnel study administrative and supervisory organization within districts and make recommendations to increase effectiveness.

The county superintendents and assistants attend district school board meetings in advisory and recommendatory capacities. They accept assignments from boards and administrators to make studies and to provide information on topics such as buildings, financing, pupil and teacher personnel, curricula, and they recommend personnel for administrative and supervisory positions.

County personnel conduct classes for school board secretaries, and seminars for acquainting new directors with their responsibilities. County personnel engage in such activities for the improvement of instruction as district administrators request. Members of county superintendents' staffs must be versatile, imaginative, stable individuals.

There are a wide range of professional services such as architectural and engineering which district administrators and school board members need seriously. Presently these services can be obtained only from persons whose compensation is determined by applying a percentage to the total expenditure. Professional services obtained in this manner have no continuity and are rarely the most economical solutions to problems. Every school district should have available on a consultant basis a civil engineer, an electrical engineer, a heating engineer, and an architect. All of these consultants can be made available economically by making them members of the county superintendent's staff. Their functions would be to make careful studies of land preparation, electrical, heating, renovation, and construction problems, to advise boards of the practicability of various proposed solutions, and to provide estimates of costs. Then and only then, is a school board in position to use the services of an engineering or architectural firm effectively.

District administrators and school boards need a wide range of specialized educational services which the district may not be able to provide because the extent of the district's requirements. Ordinarily, these requirements can be fulfilled through personnel employed in the office of the county superintendent. The county superintendent's staff may include teachers as well as supervisors or specialized consultants. A nurse may be employed at the county level to provide nursing service to a number of small school systems. A nurse supervisor could be employed to advise administrators on proper use of district employed nurses and to assist district employed nurses in improving the effectiveness of their services. The county staff may have art and music teachers to provide instruction in small districts. It may have highly trained art and music supervisors to supervise or advise and assist district employed art and music teachers. The county superintendency can be a most effective and unlimited source of assistance to any and all districts within a county at a nominal cost to any single district.

Employment of psychologists as members of the county superintendent's staff permits the most effective use of the limited number of qualified people available. County employment of psychologists spreads the services to all communities of the county. The number of well-trained psychologists willing to accept positions in schools is much smaller than the number of school districts. If school districts employ the psychologists, a limited number of districts, and I suspect wealthy districts, will have psychological services. In our county, we have found and employed seven well-trained psychologists and we have one unfilled position. If the seven wealthiest districts in the county employs these people, less than one-eighth of the school systems of the county would have the assistance of a psychologist. Employment of psychologists as part of the county staff tends to promote more effective use of psychologists in another respect. The practice dramatizes the limited number of psychologists and the urgent need to use those available more effectively. It is most unlikely that the time will come when the supply of psychologists will permit the one-to-one evaluation of all the pupils teachers will refer. Furthermore, evaluation of children referred indiscriminately is not necessarily productive. The most important function of the psychologist is to interpret

childrens' behavior so that teachers may regulate, direct, and instruct children more skillfully and successfully. From this point of view, a psychological evaluation becomes most productive when followed by discussion with groups of teachers and principals which increase teachers' capabilities to identify and to aid children who have mental, emotional, or social disturbances. Employment of psychologists at the county level insures a distribution of services and offers greater possibilities of improving teachers' capabilities.

Thus far, I have talked about planning, coordinating, advisory and consultant, in-service training, and teaching services, which may easily and logically be functions and responsibilities of the county superintendency. Now I wish to discuss instructional services which the county superintendency is peculiarly well qualified to provide. Three of these services are: (1) the film library, (2) special education, and (3) technical schools. All three services have their inception in legislation enacted during the past ten years.

The countywide or multi-countywide film library in Pennsylvania is an outgrowth of the National Defense Education Act of 1958 and the Film Library Curriculum Materials Act of the 1959 Session of the General Assembly. The General Assembly of Pennsylvania in 1959 enacted legislation requiring county boards of school directors singly or jointly to attempt to establish regional film libraries according to standards adopted by the State Council of Education. The Act outlined the administration of a library by a single County Board or by two or more County Boards jointly. County operation of film library service is too new in Pennsylvania to report positive statewide results. However, the library service in Delaware and Chester Counties is receiving complimentary comments from its participants. In our County, districts enrolling forty-six per cent of the children in the suburban districts entered into contract with the County Board for the services.

Special education services are a proper responsibility of the county superintendency. Employment of speech therapists, hearing specialists, and sight conservationists at the county level is economical and effective. The number of properly qualified specialists in speech, hearing, and sight is much smaller than the number of school districts. Wealthier districts may employ all personnel available. This practice is wasteful and selfish. Most school systems do not need full time services of speech, hearing, and sight specialists. Under a plan of district employment of speech, hearing and sight teachers, wealthy communities may offer a plethora of services while thousands of children in a majority of our school districts cannot have speech, hearing and sight training. The equalizing agency is the county office. Specialized personnel may be added to the county staff. Teachers may be assigned to communities according to need. Usually a teacher will work in two or more communities. Children needing therapy most will receive it without regard to wealth of the community. Teachers will instruct pupils who have genuine need. Thus money and talent are used to advantage.

The county superintendency can operate programs for mentally retarded and physically handicapped children more effectively than school districts with the county other than large cities. County operated special education programs can be organized in centers. A center depending upon density of population may have from two to twelve or more rooms. It may enroll children from as many as eight or ten school districts. Assembling children into centers permits a wide range of grouping. Children may be grouped according to physical or mental handicaps. Physically handicapped may be grouped

according to disability--blind, partially sighted, deaf, hard of hearing, cerebral palsy, post-polio, and other types of handicaps. Mentally retarded may be grouped according to trainable and educable. Trainable children may be divided into younger and older children. Educable children may be grouped according to junior high school, intermediate, and primary ages. Within each age group, pupils may be sectioned according to brain injury, progress in school, or other criteria. In addition to advantages gained through grouping, centers attract courageous and pioneering teachers and principals. They provide more favorable opportunities for contacts with parents. Generally, parents have greater confidence in the atmosphere of the centers. Experiences during the past five or more years indicate that effective special education programs require sufficient children in one location to permit grouping of children according to disability, mental development, and education achievement. Furthermore, effective programs require teachers and principals who are students of human behavior as well as masters of teaching skills. Programs which are countywide in scope are most likely to have these essential characteristics.

Education of children residing in certain institutions is one of the latest responsibilities of the county superintendency. Ordinarily, the school district in which a children's home is located is responsible for the education of the child. In Pennsylvania, the Commonwealth pays the tuition for children residing in an orphans' home or a home for friendless and neglected children. Usually school districts comply with the law without protest. However, school districts are resisting admission of pupils who are committed by the courts because of delinquency. Similarly school districts in which Juvenile Court detention homes are located are unwilling to provide an educational program for children in the custody of the court. Again, the agency which is countywide in scope and which can provide a service in behalf of the state not provided by a district or districts within the county is the county superintendency. The General Assembly in Pennsylvania is using the county board and superintendent to provide an educational program for children who have been committed or are in the custody of the courts.

The establishment and operation of area technical high schools is another service of the county superintendency. Despite the existence as a result of reorganization and natural growth of senior high schools enrolling twelve hundred to two thousand pupils, the enrollments are too small to offer technical education. By technical education, I mean education for the vast array of jobs, usually scientific, between the professional person and the skilled worker. Technical education is offered for pupils of above average ability who do not plan to go to college. Let us consider an electronics technician or a computer programmer. At this time, teachers of these subjects are too scarce to permit the subject to be offered in every high school over twelve hundred pupils. The enrollment in such a high school is too small to produce fifty qualified interested juniors and seniors for each laboratory. Therefore, it becomes necessary to combine the enrollments of a number of senior high schools in order to permit economical construction and use of a variety of technical laboratories. Congress recognized the need for technical education and the necessity for area technical schools as service centers for a number of high schools by including area technical schools in the National Defense Education Act of 1958. The Pennsylvania Legislature created the area technical schools legislatively in 1953. The Legislature enacted law requiring the State Board for Vocational Education to prepare a statewide plan of area technical schools. Then it required county boards of school directors (1) to establish technical school attendance areas and (2) to assemble the school directors from

districts within an attendance area in convention to consider authorizing the county board to establish and operate an area technical school. The affirmative vote of a majority of the directors permits the county board to proceed. The area technical school may offer a broad range of subjects. The program may include only shops and laboratories to offer technical training. All of the facilities may be used to trade and industrial training. Or a technical school may offer technical and trade and industrial training. The law permits instruction in a foreign language, mathematics, chemistry, and physics, if the course advances or is essential to technical training.

Technical schools in Pennsylvania may enroll pupils full time or part time. In the case of full time enrollment, pupils withdraw from their home high schools and enroll in the area technical schools. Or pupils may at the beginning of the eleventh grade elect to attend classes in the home high school one-half day and the technical schools one-half day. These pupils usually carry three subjects in the home high school. The technical school coordinates with the home high school exactly as if a wing of the high school building. Instead of walking down the corridor to a shop or laboratory for a period or double period, pupils, technical school pupils, walk to the entrance, board a bus, and go to the technical school for one-half day. Each school district pays for the education of its pupils. The state pays special reimbursement to the district of residence. N.D.E.A. funds are payable to the county board. Thus, the General Assembly found a simple method to expand high school curricula, to insure maximum use of expensive equipment, and to assemble pupils having similar aptitudes, interests, and capabilities. The county superintendency is an effective agency for providing educational opportunities to students from a number of school districts.

In conclusion, I venture to claim that the county superintendency either in county unit states or intermediate unit states is receiving growing recognition. It is an extremely useful and potentially versatile administrative agency. The intermediate unit states are learning what county unit states have known for years; namely, the county can provide a wider range of educational services more economically than the separate municipalities which comprise the county. The county superintendency as an intermediate agency has unlimited possibilities. It is an arm of the state to supervise and inspect district operation. It is the planning agency for reorganization of school districts. The county superintendency is the source of advice and assistance for district administrators and school boards. The range of problems submitted by districts is infinite. A staff of specialists at the county level are no farther from the districts than the nearest telephone. The districts' share of the cost is nominal. For handicapped children, institutionalized children, capable unchallenged high school pupils, the county superintendency is a source of hope and opportunity. But the man, the county superintendent, faced with increasing responsibility must make continuous reappraisals of himself, his staff, the districts he serves. The office becomes more exacting day by day. Problems placed before the County Superintendent are increasingly complex. The range of topics which district administrators place before the County Superintendent grows and grows. He acts in behalf of the staff, the districts, as well as administrator of difficult educational services. To discharge the varied obligations of the county superintendency, the county superintendent of 1960 must be a scholar, an administrator, a counselor, a salesman, a diplomat. The county superintendency is in the spotlight. The future of the office is beyond prediction. Of this we are certain, its duties and responsibilities will continue to change.